Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims to cancel claims 19 and 20 as follows:

1. (Previously presented) A method of gathering information about a connection between a sender and a recipient in a network comprising the steps of:

generating an information query by the sender;

sending the information query to the recipient;

receiving the information query at a border device of the recipient; and

processing the information query at the border device to provide selected information in response to the information query to the sender, the selected information including address identification information that is different than that of the border device and different than that of the sender.

2. Cancelled

3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

storing at least a portion of the selected information sent from the border device to the sender at the sender when a destination address of the information query corresponds to a predetermined group of addresses stored at the sender; and

utilizing the stored selected information from the response whenever an information query is generated including any of the predetermined group of addresses stored at the sender.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 3, further comprising the steps of:

deleting the stored selected information after a predetermined period of time.

5. (Previously presented) A method of gathering information about a connection between a sender and a recipient in a network comprising the steps of:

 generating an information query by the sender;

 sending the information query to the recipient; and

 receiving the information query at a border device of the recipient; and

 processing the information query at the border device according to a plurality of predetermined rules,

 wherein said predetermined rules provide for one of: providing selected information requested by the information query in a response to the information query to be sent to the sender, the selected information including address identification information that is different than that of the border device and different than that of the sender; discarding the information query; and passing the information query through the border device to the recipient for response.

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5 wherein:

 one of said plurality of predetermined rules provides for discarding the information query when the information query is of a size larger than a predetermined range of allowable sizes.

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein:

 one rule of said plurality of predetermined rules provides for passing the information query through the border unit to the recipient for response when the information query includes predetermined identification information.

8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, further comprising the steps of:

 storing at least the selected information of the response provided from the border device when a destination address of the information query to which the response was generated corresponds

to any of a plurality of predetermined addresses stored at the sender; and

using the stored selected information of the response whenever an information query including any of the plurality of predetermined addresses stored at the sender is generated rather than sending the information query to the recipient.

9. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein:

the stored selected information is deleted after a predetermined period of time passes.

10. (Previously presented) A border device positioned between a sender and a recipient for use in gathering information regarding a connection between the sender and the recipient in a network, the border device comprising:

a receiver for receiving an information query from the sender addressed to the recipient;

a processor for processing the information query on behalf of the recipient to generate a response to said information query including selected information including address identification information that is different than that of the border device and different than that of the sender; and

a transmitter for sending the response including the selected information to the sender.

11. Cancelled

12. (Previously presented) The border device of claim 10, wherein:

the border device responds to information queries for a plurality of recipients.

13. (Previously presented) A method of gathering performance measurement information regarding a connection between a sender

and a recipient in a network comprising the steps of:

generating a performance measurement packet by the sender;

sending the performance measurement packet to the recipient;

receiving the performance measurement packet at a border device of the recipient; and

processing the performance measurement packet at the border device according to a plurality of predetermined rules, wherein said predetermined rules provide for one of: generating a response packet to the performance measurement packet to provide performance metric information to be sent to the sender, the response packet including address information that is different than that of the border device and different than that of the sender; discarding the performance measurement packet; and passing the performance measurement packet to the recipient.

14. Cancelled

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 13, wherein:

one of the predetermined rules provides for discarding the performance measurement packet when a size of the performance measurement packet exceeds a range of allowable sizes.

16. (Currently amended) The method of claim 13, wherein:

one rule of the plurality of predetermined rules provides for passing the performance measurement packet through the border ~~unit~~device to the recipient when the performance measurement packet includes predetermined identification information.

17. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 13, further comprising the steps of:

storing at least the performance metric information of the response packet generated by the border device in response to the performance measurement packet when a destination address of the performance measurement packet corresponds to one of a plurality of predetermined addresses stored at the sender; and

using the stored performance metric information of the response packet whenever a performance measurement packet including any of the plurality of predetermined addresses stored at the sender is generated by the sender rather than sending the performance measurement packet to the recipient.

18.   (Previously presented) The method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

deleting the stored performance metric information after a predetermined period of time.

19.   Cancelled

20.   Cancelled

21.   (Previously presented) The border device of claim 10, wherein the border device is a router.

22.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein in the receiving step, the border device responds on behalf of one or more other active or inactive addresses, where the information query is selected from a group consisting of a service availability query, a system availability query and a performance measurement query.

23.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein in the receiving step, the border device responds on behalf of one or more other active or inactive addresses, where the information query is selected from a group consisting of a service availability query, a system availability query and a performance measurement query.

24.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the border device responds on behalf of one or more other active or inactive addresses, where the information query is selected from

a group consisting of a service availability query, a system availability query and a performance measurement query.